

CHAPTER IX

RECAPITULATION

THE evidence adduced in previous chapters has been given in detail in order to render it more convincing, but such a mass of information may be found wearisome and difficult to assimilate by the average reader who wishes to get at the gist of the argument. It may therefore be of use if the main heads of the argument are briefly recapitulated, and an attempt be made to view the various aspects of the subject in some relation to their relative importance.

The problem at issue is the choice of the best methods for the promotion of increasing sobriety, so as ultimately to reduce the evil effects of indulgence in alcohol to a minimum, or to eliminate them altogether. We have seen that, so far from there being any easy and simple way of solving our difficulties, all the information collected from other countries indicates that the process must necessarily be a very slow one. Once the members of a community have formed certain habits of drinking alcoholic liquors, they will not be substantially deflected from them if they can possibly help it, and we must rely chiefly on the education of the younger generation, who have not yet acquired these habits, in order to achieve considerable reforms. It is true that by the adoption of wise and moderate regulations something can be effected, but drastic changes which cut at the root of well-worn habits provoke such a violent reaction